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MONDAY, DECEMBER 7, 1931

WHOLE No. 671

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THE YOUNGER PLINY DISCLOSES THE SOCIAL LIFE OF HIS DAY¹

Why, you may ask, do I choose Pliny the Younger as the subject of this paper? I reply, I choose him because of the occasion and the place. To what other of the ancient Romans could this assembly of scholars give keener delight than to Pliny, himself a distinguished man of letters^{1a}, a zealous promoter of education²? Has not this group assembled for the very purpose so dear to his heart, that of fostering the love of learning and advancing its cause? Again, to whom would the charming scene which lies before us have a stronger appeal than to this man who had such an exquisite feeling for the beauties of nature³? When the name of Pliny has been suggested, what is more logical than to turn to his vivid and varied picture of the ordinary, everyday life of his time, a picture in which he portrays for us cultured, noble-minded men and women⁴, living, even in the worst days of the Empire, lives of purity and probity, and practising the ideal Roman virtues in an age in which they were believed to be extinct, an age too long smeared by the muckrake, too long judged from the fulminations of Juvenal and the pessimistic outlook of Tacitus? Juvenal and Tacitus too have painted for us pictures of contemporary society, but their pictures are dark. Pliny's is brighter, and we cannot escape the conviction that it is truer.

Pliny the Younger was born in 62 A.D., at Comum, on the shore of the lovely Lacus Larius. He lived under nine Emperors, survived the horrors under Domitian, so vividly described by his intimate friend, Tacitus, and with him, when the black pall was lifted, breathed freely once more. Himself a victim of 'de-lation' at the hands of the infamous Carus⁵, he escaped, only because death claimed the Emperor before the sentence could be executed⁶.

In the years immediately following the reign of terror, Rome reached the zenith of her glory; the triumphs of her architecture and the magnificence of her palaces made her a city of marvels. Every known luxury was accessible, and for erudition and study there were the most glorious opportunities.

Literature was Pliny's master passion⁷. Though much of his time was given to public duties⁸, and though his friends made unceasing demands on what remained⁹, he nevertheless found leisure for his books, and, while he hesitates to affirm unreservedly that it

would be better for him to spend all his time in study, he acknowledges that it would afford him greater happiness to do so¹⁰. Often, wearied by the endless round of conventional duties, he would steal away to his beloved Laurentum¹¹, a little town by the sea, where he escaped the gossip and the scandals of the capital, and, undisturbed by rumors and free from anxiety, could devote himself to his books. This, he says, was for him the only genuine life, a most honorable repose, more to be desired than any employment, and the inspiration of his noblest thoughts¹². Under the spell of solitude he writes to a friend, urging him to quit Rome with its din, its empty bustle, and its laborious trifles, and to give up his days to study¹³. Caninius Rufus, too, his fellow-townsmen, he advises to entrust his 'business' to others, and to make study his business, to spend in literary pursuits his waking and even his sleeping hours, that he may produce something worthy of his genius¹⁴. Many more of his friends does Pliny encourage to seek literary fame¹⁵; in this he was impelled no doubt by his ardent desire to save literature from perishing utterly, for elsewhere he writes¹⁶, 'literature, though well-nigh extinct, seems to be again reviving among us'.

It was a custom, believed to have originated with Asinius Pollio, for an author to recite his works to his friends at his own house¹⁷, or, often, to larger audiences in public places. In fact, men who were enthusiastic patrons of letters were willing to open their halls to every one who had works to read in public¹⁸. Though the bookselling trade was well established¹⁹, there was no way for a man to advertise a new book except to read it in public and to distribute copies of it. No aspect of social life is more prominent in Pliny's letters than this reading of new works. Pliny showed his interest in the literary profession by his scrupulous attendance at all the public readings²⁰, the only conventional duty which he discharged quite cheerfully, even when it entailed his remaining in town long after the close of the season—a real hardship for this country-loving man. By his presence and his praise he encouraged many a would-be author to do the utmost of which he was capable²¹. The year 97, he tells us²², had produced a plentiful crop (*magnus proventus*) of poets. Though the word *proventus* seems to imply that many of the so-called poets deserved commendation for effort rather than for achievement, still Pliny considers it a sacred duty to letters and to friendship to lend his presence on every occasion of this sort. Of course, the cultured aristocrats of his day, being excluded from active participation in political life, turned in great

¹This paper was read at the Annual Meeting of The Classical Association of the Atlantic States, held at the Pennsylvania College for Women, Pittsburgh, May 16-17, 1930.

Unless it is otherwise stated, references are to Pliny, *Epistulae*.

^{1a}9.23.3. ²4.13.5-6; 1.8.10. ³1.3.1; 5.6; 8.8; 9.7.

⁴1.10; 1.22.1-2; 2.1.1; 2.9.3; 3.1.1; 3.10.6; 4.15.1; 4.21.2; 6.26.1-2;

7.19.4; 8.5.1. ⁵7.27.14. ⁶8.19.1.

⁷1.10.9; 2.8.3; 2.14.1; 3.9.1; 4.8.1; 4.24.1; 5.15.5; 6.18.1; 6.29.8;

7.5.2. ⁸1.24.2; 2.9.2; 2.13.8; 3.2.5-6; 3.8.1; 4.4.2; 4.9.1; 4.17.1; 6.6.1;

7.15.1; 8.9.1.

¹⁰7.15.1; 8.10.1. ¹¹1.9.4. ¹²1.9.6. ¹³1.9.7. ¹⁴1.3.4.

¹⁵2.10.8; 3.15.3; 4.20.2; 5.10.2; 5.11.3; 5.17.4; 8.4.1; 9.1.1.

¹⁶3.18.5. ¹⁷2.10.7; 2.10.1; 3.10.1; 3.18.4; 4.5.2; 5.3.7; 5.13.1; 7.17.1; 6.21.2;

8.21.2. ¹⁸8.12.2. ¹⁹1.2.6; 5.11.3; 9.11.2.

²⁰1.13.5; 4.27.1; 5.17.2; 8.12.1. ²¹4.27.5; 5.17.4. ²²1.13.1.

numbers to literature for occupation as well as for amusement, with the inevitable result of overproduction. How little of it was really literature the ages have proven, and we must be grateful that the rest of it has been lost in the transition from that age to our own. However zealous in the cause of letters Pliny may have been, he lets us know that not all the members of his circle shared his zeal. Many considered the readings a nuisance, an irksome duty to be shirked if the shirking could be done with impunity. Some, though invited long before and repeatedly reminded of the coming event, either failed to appear at all, or, if they did come, came grudgingly. Others, after loitering in some lounging-place, would finally enter the hall with ostentatious reluctance, and leave before the end²³. On one occasion Pliny became indignant because, while an excellent work was being read, two or three persons in the audience sat like mutes without so much as moving a lip or a hand, or once rising from their seats even to change their positions. He denounces such rudeness, and is at a loss to understand why men would spend a whole day insulting a fellowman and leave him an enemy rather than a friend²⁴. On another occasion a Roman knight, who numbered Propertius among his ancestors and had inherited from the poet some talent for elegiac verse, was reading a poem which began, 'Priscus, at your command', when a man named Priscus, who was present as a particular friend of the poet, cried out, 'But he is mistaken! I did not command him'²⁵. The interruption occasioned much laughter among the audience, but no doubt sadly embarrassed the reader. After some uncomplimentary remarks on Priscus's unsound wits, Pliny, disgusted, advises those who are to recite works in public to take care that the audience is perfectly sane²⁶. We can easily understand why a gentleman of Pliny's type, dignified, courteous, considerate of others, could not endure such boorishness. But, of course, not all the listeners were so lacking in appreciation of the author's work, at least not openly. Many themselves were authors, who were looking forward to occupying the platform, and so could afford to be lavish of their praise. Nevertheless, it was not unusual for a reader to insure himself against possible embarrassment by providing himself with a reserve of hired applauders²⁷.

After Pliny had delivered in the Senate his oration of thanks to Trajan for his nomination to the consulship, he revised the speech and expanded it with a view to publication. He wished to read it publicly that his friends might point out to him such errors as had escaped his observation. Although he did not send out the usual formal invitations, but merely requested the presence of his friends, 'should it be quite convenient to them' and 'if they should happen to have no other engagement', no excuses were offered and no prior engagements were alleged. In spite of the worst possible weather, his friends attended the recital for three whole days²⁸. Of course, Pliny had a multitude of friends and was deservedly popular, but it is possible that his audience hoped to gain the Emperor's favor by

evincing interest in a document which enlarged upon his virtues and his achievements. Be that as it may, a little later, surprised and aggrieved, Pliny writes that he has just heard that there are those who blame him for reading his speeches²⁹. Since he was probably the first to inflict the reading of speeches on long-suffering friends, this criticism no doubt distressed him beyond measure.

Pliny's zeal for the cause of learning did not stop with encouraging young authors and attending their readings. We find friends consulting him about suitable schools and tutors for their sons and wards. Pliny, at the request of their uncle, selects a school for the sons of a dear deceased friend, but he writes that he intends to hear all the professors and to send such an account of them as will enable the uncle to judge of their respective abilities³⁰. Imagine such a procedure in our busy world to-day. Once, in recommending a tutor for a young friend he passes over the man's professional qualifications, and assures the boy's mother that here is a man whose first care will be to form the character of the boy, and after that to instruct him in eloquence³¹. When, on another occasion, he was asked to sketch a desirable method of study, the detailed program he offers shows deep thought and concludes with the advice to read much, but not many books³². A little less in accord with present-day customs was a request that Pliny select a husband for the sister of the young gentleman mentioned above. He presents a young man so suitable in every respect that he seems almost made to order, and gives his family history, including that of the grandfather and the grandmother³³. Let us hope for the young maiden's sake that the bridegroom made as favorable an impression on her, and that he lived up to his reputation.

What other social obligations claimed the attention of men and women of Pliny's aristocratic circle? They were as many and as varied as those of the society people of our own day. Pliny mentions social engagements sufficient to occupy the whole day: a betrothal ceremony in the early morning, a wedding for which the guests assembled before daybreak, a coming-out party³⁴ (though here it was the young man who was introduced to society when he had reached man's estate, and assumed the *toga virilis*). The young girl, even though betrothed, was usually secluded from social life, and only on the eve of her marriage did she take leave of her childhood, consecrating her dolls and her toys to the household gods. Over night she developed into a Roman matron with absolute freedom and many privileges. Pliny tells with genuine sorrow of the death of a little girl of his acquaintance³⁵. Though scarcely fourteen, she was betrothed, the wedding day had been set, and the invitations had been sent out when she fell sick and died. The money which the father had set aside for her trousseau and jewels he ordered to be expended in frankincense, ointments, and perfumes for her burial. Though marriage at such an early age is repugnant to us of the twentieth century, it was very common in the first. At the advanced age of

²³ I. 13.2.
²³ 3.18.7.

²⁴ 6.17.3.

²⁵ 6.15.2.

²⁶ 6.15.4.

²⁷ 2.14.6.

²⁹ 7.17.2.

²⁹ 1.14.5-7.

³⁰ 2.18.3.

³¹ 1.9.2.

³¹ 3.3.7.

³² 5.16.1.

³³ 7.9.16.

nineteen, the unmarried girl was a hopeless old maid. In the rare cases where this occurred, the girl's prospective dowry was usually increased, and knowledge of this increase was conveyed to eligible young men, that she might be saved from spinsterhood.

Those who had any connection with a new magistrate were very strictly required to attend his inauguration. The solemn procession in which friends, relatives, and clients, attending consuls, or other dignitaries went with the magistrate to the Capitol is often mentioned. Verginius Rufus, the grand old man of his generation, who had three times been consul, and had three times refused the 'purple', used to come to town on every new elevation of Pliny³⁶. Corellius Rufus, of whose self-inflicted death Pliny writes with genuine grief, also used to accompany him on such days³⁷. Pliny sends a very formal apology to a friend for his absence on such an occasion; this shows what a slight non-appearance on such occasions was considered³⁸.

To the Romans of all periods the public games were of absorbing interest³⁹. They were held not only on regular festival days, which before the close of the first century probably exceeded one hundred in the year, but also on other occasions, which were frequent and long drawn-out. At his second triumph over the Dacians, Trajan gave a festival that lasted one hundred and twenty-three days. All the more important spectacles began at sunrise and lasted until dark, and people sat patiently through them in spite of wind and weather. Celebrations at night, too, must have been common, as we find 'spectacles and illuminations' often mentioned in records. The chief interest of the Romans seems to have centered in the chariot-races. To see these all classes congregated. Strange to say, neither the charioteers themselves nor the horses were the objects of the absorbing interest which the Romans took in racing, but the so-called factions of the charioteers, designated by their colors, White, Red, Green, or Blue. After the early days of the Empire, the Greens and the Blues eliminated the other colors. The populace might know little about horses and racing, but could always take sides with Green or with Blue. Pliny could not see why attention was given to the color rather than to the things that really counted, namely, the skill of the drivers and the speed of the horses, nor why, if pieces of colored cloth were exchanged in the race, men's sympathies were changed as well, nor why the persons who had been acclaiming by name horses and drivers would suddenly abandon them. He could have forgiven the rabble for this senseless partisanship, but, when he observed men of learning wasting their time in such idle occupations, he prided himself on being above them⁴⁰.

Gladiatorial combats were likewise popular⁴¹, as well as fights between men and beasts, and between wild beasts. Although Rome had three great theaters, theatrical performances had comparatively little vogue. In Pliny's time the plays themselves were of no great merit. The *fabulae palliatae* were still presented, but they were not popular. Tragedies were written,

and sometimes acted, but generally were intended for the library rather than for the stage. What were really popular were the Atellan farces and the mimes⁴². These were frankly indecent, sometimes obscene, but the masses revelled in them, while the cultured who desired an artistic drama were too few in number to maintain it.

In enumerating the amusements of the Roman people one certainly cannot pass over the Public Baths. At the Baths there were gardens, lecture-halls, rooms where one might meet and chat with one's friends, even libraries, in fact almost every convenience of a combined modern City Club and Country Club. Thus, not only the Bath itself, but the social life that it made possible attracted.

Dinner engagements, too, played a large part in the social life of Pliny's circle. The *cena* was the last and the most important event of the day. Beginning about three o'clock it lasted often till past midnight. It might consist of any number of courses, according to the wealth or the extravagance of the host. Pliny's fare was always simple, but was the same for all at his table. A notorious custom was to serve food and wine of different qualities to the guests, according to their rank⁴³. Pliny, having been present at one such entertainment, expresses his contempt for the combination of extravagance and meanness which characterized his vulgar host. He charitably refrains from giving the man's name. During the meal entertainments as diverse as possible (differing according to the culture of the hosts) were given to the guests. Sometimes scenes from tragedies or from comedies were acted⁴⁴, but the usual form of entertainment consisted in readings⁴⁵, literary and musical solos⁴⁶, chorus-singing, lyre-playing⁴⁷, and flute-playing. There were also professional declaimers and story-tellers. Sometimes the host recited his own compositions, and then the guests felt they had earned their dinner by listening and applauding. That entertainments of a far different character were sometimes presented was shown by the reply of Pliny to an indignant friend, who was disgusted by what others considered a very splendid entertainment, given by a set of buffoons, mummers, and prostitutes dancing around the tables⁴⁸. Pliny disapproves, yet realizes that only low-grade amusement appeals to a large class of low-grade men.

The unhealthiness of Rome in the summer and in the early autumn months made country life almost a necessity. Hence at the approach of the summer heat the wealthy man of Pliny's time left town for one of his numerous villas. Pliny himself owned at least two country-houses on Lake Como, which he called Tragedy and Comedy⁴⁹, a Tuscan estate near Tifernum⁵⁰, and villas at Praeneste⁵¹, Tibur⁵², Tusculum⁵³, and Laurentum⁵⁴. The last two he has described for us in detail⁵⁵, but with far greater emphasis on the wonderful and varied views from the windows than on the rooms or their furnishings. He possessed all the qualities of an

³⁶2.1.8.³⁷4.17.6.³⁸9.37.1-5.³⁹9.6.2.⁴⁰9.6.3.⁴¹1.8.10; 6.34.1.⁴²7.24.4-7. ⁴³2.6.2. ⁴⁴3.1.9; 9.17.3.⁴⁵3.5.10; 9.36.4; 9.17.3. ⁴⁶1.15.3. ⁴⁷9.17.3. ⁴⁸9.17.1.⁴⁹9.7.3. ⁵⁰3.1.4; 4.6.1; 5.6.1; 5.18.2; 9.15.1. ⁵¹5.6.15.⁵²5.6.15. ⁵³5.6.15; 4.13.1. ⁵⁴2.17.1; 1.9.4; 1.22.11.⁵⁵2.17; 5.6.

ideal country gentleman. Though he was sometimes harassed by troublesome tenants⁵⁶, as any landowner, ancient or modern, is sure to be, and annoyed because the harvests were bad⁵⁷ and the vintage poor⁵⁸, nevertheless he was happiest when he was in the country.

He was not a very wealthy man. Yet his benefactions to his personal friends⁵⁹ and to the communities in which he was interested—notably his birthplace, Comum—were marked by munificence⁶⁰. He discovers that the young men of Comum are obliged to resort to Milan for their higher education⁶¹. He immediately offers to pay one-third of the expense of a school at Comum, provided the parents shall raise the rest by a general contribution. He shows great wisdom here, and proves himself no mean psychologist. The boys, he believes, will be safer under the protection of home influence, and the interest of the parents in the cause of education and in the appointment of competent teachers will be stimulated, for he realizes that, though they might be negligent in disposing of his money, they will certainly be cautious how they spend their own. He built a library, too, at Comum, and endowed it⁶², and a temple at Tifernum⁶³. He left, also, generous bequests for numberless charitable purposes. Even in his treatment of his slaves he showed himself humane⁶⁴.

But Pliny is only one of the many public benefactors in this age⁶⁵. Orphans and the children of the poor were cared for, marriage portions were bestowed on young women who needed them, and the sick and the aged were provided for. Public baths were built, as well as theaters, porticoes, and markets. In fact, we find profuse generosity whose purpose was to relieve want and suffering, and to provide means for recreation and enjoyment. We do not claim that the motive for this beneficence was always pure, but nevertheless the poor profited by it.

However, when we find great wealth, avarice, its unfailling attendant, is sure to be near at hand. Among the base methods of gratifying inordinate desires, the mean practice of paying court to the wealthy, with an eye to their fortunes, was extremely common⁶⁶. The bar was the only profession open to men of standing, and, while gifts were proffered, every man engaging in a law suit was required by a decree of the Senate to take an oath that he had not given, promised, or engaged to give any fee or reward to any advocate, upon account of his undertaking his cause⁶⁷. Consequently the difficulty of making money by honest means gave great impetus to the contemptible custom of legacy-hunting; by some no means of gaining the desired end were considered degrading⁶⁸. The notorious Regulus went so far as to compel a lady whose will he had been called in to draw up to leave him the elegant garments she was wearing at the time⁶⁹. Let us hope she outlived him. Inheritances, however, were not always unalloyed

blessings, since the claims against the deceased sometimes far exceeded the assets of the estate, and the heir by accepting the inheritance made himself responsible for the liquidation of the debts⁷⁰. The breaking of wills by disappointed kinsmen seems to have been as common then as now⁷¹.

That the method of conducting elections properly was a serious problem for the old Romans Pliny reveals to us in two letters. In the early assemblies the name of the candidate was called, and in the midst of profound silence he gave an account to the Senate of his life and behavior, and then called witnesses to support his statements. Sometimes he objected to the birth, age, or character of his competitor and the Senate listened with impartial attention⁷². But in time the Romans departed from this orderly method of procedure, and riot and confusion prevailed⁷³. Then they had recourse to balloting as the most probable remedy for the evils. But this too was abused, for, Pliny tells us, on one occasion some of the dignified senators had written pleasantries and even indecencies on the ballots⁷⁴.

Very modern, too, is Pliny in his censure of the young men of his time⁷⁵. He might be speaking to-day when he says⁷⁶,

'Who of our young men nowadays will deign to submit to the experience of their elders or the authority of their superiors? They think themselves at once full of wisdom and knowledge; there is no one they look up to, no one they imitate, and they imagine they are a sufficient example to themselves'.

Now, however, since we realize that the young men and young women of our own age are much maligned, we may reasonably conclude that the young persons of Pliny's generation were probably not so bad as he thought them.

Many other details of the life of Rome's 'four hundred' are revealed in the letters, which cannot even be touched upon here. I should like to describe for you the ideal married love and married life of the young and charming Calpurnia and staid, mature Pliny⁷⁷, but, lest I abuse your patience, I shall add not one word more.

SETON HALL COLLEGE,
GREENSBURG, PENNSYLVANIA SISTER M. ALOYSIUS BLAKELY

REVIEW

The Youth of Virgil. By Bruno Nardi. Translated by Belle Palmer Rand. With a Preface by Edward Kennard Rand. Cambridge: Harvard University Press (1930). Pp. xii + 139.

A booklet entitled *La Giovinezza di Virgilio* (Mantua, 1927) was a contribution by Professor Bruno Nardi to "the honors that Mantua bestows upon that son of hers who brought her so much glory" (xi); through Mrs. Rand's English version, which embodies "corrections and enlargements by the author..." (v), the book will receive a deservedly wider recognition as an excellent brief survey of Vergil's career until he finished the *Bucolics*. The work is distinguished for the author's skillful and conservative use of the ancient sources,

⁵⁶9.15.1; 5.15.8; 7.30.3. ⁵⁷4.6.1.
⁵⁸8.2.1-2; 8.15.2; 9.16.1-2; 9.20.2; 9.28.2.
⁵⁹1.19.2; 2.4; 3.21.2; 3.11.2; 6.25.3; 6.32.2; 7.11.1; 7.14.1.
⁶⁰1.8.2-10; 3.4.2; 3.6.4; 4.1.5; 7.18.2; 9.39.1-3. ⁶¹4.13.3.
⁶²1.8.10. ⁶³4.1.5. ⁶⁴2.17.24-25; 5.19.7; 6.3.1; 8.16.1.
⁶⁵5.12.1; 6.34.1; 8.18.2.
⁶⁶4.15.3. <On benefactions in the Roman Empire see a paper by Professor Adeline B. Hawes, *Charities and Philanthropies in the Roman Empire*, THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY 6.178-181. C. K.>
⁶⁷5.21.4. ⁶⁸2.20.3; 8.18.2. ⁶⁹2.20.11.

⁷⁰2.4.2. ⁷¹5.1.2. ⁷²3.20.5. ⁷³3.20.7. ⁷⁴4.25.1. ⁷⁵2.14.4.
⁷⁶8.23.3. ⁷⁷4.19; 6.4; 6.7; 7.5; 10.121.2; 10.122.5.

the vivid sketches of the changes in the political and social environment, and the vigorous defense of the popular tradition which identified Andes, the birthplace of Vergil, with Pietole.

The contents of the volume are as follows:

Preface to the Translation <by E. K. Rand> (v-vi); Table of Contents (vii); List of Works Frequently Cited (ix); To the Reader <by Bruno Nardi> (xi-xii); I. Mantua Me Genuit (3-41); II. Carmina Pastorum (42-68); III. Paulo Maiora (69-100); IV. Ite, Capellae (101-109); Appendix I: Virgil's Birthplace (113-136); Appendix II: The Confiscation of Lands (137-139).

After a review of Vergil's praises of the Mantuan country, Professor Nardi discusses, in the first chapter, the parents of the poet, the place and the time of his birth, the legends about his birth (3), and his educational career. We are reminded (8) that all the ancient biographers, except the author of the *Vita Bernensis*, testify to the fact that the poet's "parents were country folk of modest condition..." and (10) that Vergil "took pleasure in attributing Etruscan origin to himself and to his city". It is also possible, thinks Professor Nardi, that Vergil's parents, or, at least his father, descended from the Latin colonists that migrated into Transpadane Gaul from Central Italy. Professor Nardi has no doubt (7) that Vergil was born "in Andes, a village three Roman miles distant from Mantua near the banks of the Mincio..." The hypothesis that Vergil's parents were Mantuans who happened to be at Andes when the poet was born is dismissed (16) "for the reason that according to the most ancient and most probable accounts the parents of the Poet were country people, engaged in farming..." Professor Nardi believes that the legend of the poplar tree might have as an historical basis the veneration of the tree, which was planted, according to the local custom, on the farm where Vergil was born, and that from this legend arose another which stated that Vergil was born in a ditch. He is convinced that Vergil assumed the *toga virilis* when he was seventeen years old (as all the manuscripts of Donatus, *Vita Vergili*, state), and that Reifferscheid's correction of XVII to XV is unjustified. The present text of Donatus with its reference to the second consulate of Pompey and Crassus seems to him (26) "to combine two accounts, probably from different sources..." In regard to the statement of the grammarians that Vergil was an Epicurean, Professor Nardi does well to remind us (37, note 3²) of an interpolation in the Bodleian Manuscript of Donatus's *Vita Vergili*: *Et quamvis diversorum philosophorum opiniones libris suis inseruisse de animo maxime videatur, ipse fuit Academicus; nam Platonis sententias omnibus aliis praetulit*.

Chapter II, *Carmina Pastorum*, is concerned with the poems of the Appendix Vergiliana, the political turmoil in the decade when Vergil began the composition of the *Bucolics*, and *Eclogues* 2, 3, 5, and 7. In a

brief discussion (42-47) of the minor poems, Professor Nardi remarks (46) "that only in the time of Servius do we find indubitable evidence of the existence of the collection that, by hypothesis, goes back to the time of Lucius Varius, and beyond..." He evidently thinks that it is not absolutely necessary (see 36, 96) to attribute any of the minor poems to Vergil, but he admits (46) that some "like the *Copa* and the *Moretum*, are in quality not unworthy of the poet of the *Bucolics*; the *Culex*... might not be unsuited to him..." Of the other so-called juvenile poems, he thinks that only a few pieces in the *Catalepton* are likely to be authentic. The discussion of the *Bucolics*, to which is devoted the major part of the volume (47-105), Professor Nardi introduces (50-57) by an historical sketch of the years 49-42. The statement of Donatus, *Bucolica triennio...perfecit*, he would interpret to mean that Vergil spent about three years, but not three continuous years, on the *Bucolics*, for the allusions to Lycoris's crossing of the Alps make it necessary to assume that *Eclogue* 10 was written in 37 B. C. after a "pause of silence..." (102) between it and *Eclogue* 9. The ten *Eclogues* Professor Nardi discusses in what seems to him to be the probable order of composition, skilfully indicating the development of Vergil's poetic art and the changing environment in which the poet worked and by which he was influenced. The fourth *Eclogue* he places just before the tenth. He emphasizes (49) the fact that "the pastoral songs of the Mantuan Poet...reflect both natural and historical reality..." Even in Vergil's earliest bucolic poem, the second, there is found (62-63) "a fundamental characteristic of all Virgil's poetry—high originality despite the imitation of the Greek models..." The song of Menalcas in *Eclogue* 5 marks a considerable advance in the poet's ability to write pastoral poetry with original inspiration; in fact, most of the poem is meant (66) to be "a continuation rather than an imitation of the song of Theocritus". Professor Nardi is chary of accepting allegorical interpretations of the *Eclogues*; of the fifth he says (67), "if there is a partial allegory, it can be applied only to Julius Caesar..."

Professor Nardi begins the third chapter, *Paulo Maiora*, with a consideration of *Eclogue* 4; he then takes up in order *Eclogues* 6, 8, 1, 9. There is a clear account of the relation of Horace, *Epode* 16 and the *Pollio Song* (*Eclogue* 4) to the events culminating in the Peace of Brundisium. With the *Pollio* (78) "...Virgil breaks away completely from the imitation of Theocritus and turns his pastoral song to civic uses..." In *Eclogue* 6 he goes further (78), "venturing a bucolical setting for philosophic ideas on the origin of the world". *Eclogues* 1 and 9, which deal with the confiscations, Professor Nardi assigns to the year 39. Evidence is marshalled to show that *Eclogue* 1 is the earlier of the two poems, and that *Eclogue* 9 records a vain attempt, involving real danger, to take possession again of the property that had been restored *de iure* by Octavian. There is reason to believe that Probus and others were wrong in stating that Vergil's lands near Mantua were restored to him. In fixing the order of these two poems Professor Nardi agrees with Cartault, whose

²In THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY 24.179, note 33a, will be found reference to a paper by Miss Leonora R. Furr, entitled *The Nationality of Vergil*, which appeared in *The Classical Journal* 25 (1930), 340-346. Miss Furr holds that the *gentes* of Vergil's father and mother were of Samnite origin. C. K. >

³See also page 80, note 1.

work on the *Bucolics*³ is cited rather frequently. In the final chapter, *Ite, Capellae*, Professor Nardi discusses the last of the *Bucolics*, tells of Vergil's friends in the literary circle of Maecenas, describes his physical appearance, and defends from the slanders of the evil-minded commentators the moral character of the poet, commonly called *Parthenias*.

Probably the most important part of the book is Appendix I, *Virgil's Birthplace*, in which the author defends (117) "The popular tradition which places in the village of Pietole, near the banks of the Mincio, the house and the farm where Virgil was born..." Professor Rand tells us (vi) that "This section of the book has been revised and enlarged by Professor Nardi expressly for the present translation..." The introduction to Probus's commentary on the *Bucolics* contains in the first sentence "the earliest statement about Virgil's birthplace..." (113), and, in the present text, as given by Thilo and Hagen, states that the poet was born in *vico Andico, qui abest a Mantua milia passuum XXX*. Professor Nardi points out that this statement is the basis of the only weighty argument against the ancient popular tradition. If Andes was really *milia passuum XXX* from Mantua, then certainly it cannot be identified with Pietole Vecchio. Professor Nardi settles the difficulty by appealing to the reading of a *codex vetustissimus* which was discovered by Georgio Merula in the monastery of Bobbio and was utilized by Egnatius in his edition of Vergil, published, in 1507, at Venice. This codex is now lost. Hagen used three manuscripts of the fifteenth century and Egnatius's edition in preparing his critical text of Probus's commentary on Vergil, but he failed to indicate in his *Apparatus Criticus* that Egnatius disagrees with the three extant manuscripts by reading *vico Andico qui abest a Mantua millia passuum iij*⁴. In this Appendix Professor Nardi also cites abundant evidence for the antiquity of Vergilian traditions current at Pietole and opposes the attempts of Besutti and Conway to locate the birthplace of Vergil elsewhere than at Pietole.

Appendix II is a digest of the varying statements made in the ancient commentaries about the confiscation of Vergil's lands.

Attention ought to be called to some errors and questionable statements. Since they do not concern matters of much importance, their citation should not create an unfavorable impression of the book. The discussion in Quintilian 1.4-9 is not, as the author states (24), about "those subjects which...were taught in the first grade..." Clodius's body was burned in the Senate-house, or rather along with the building itself, and not outside of the building, "at the forum..." as is implied on page 30⁵. It has been doubted⁶ whether

Cicero called the *poetae novae* "caustically" *cantores Euphorionis* "for their imitation of the Alexandrines..." (39). If it is true (29) that "in 52 B. C., Virgil, at the age of eighteen, was making his entrance into the city of which he had heard so much...", then the death of Catullus almost certainly occurred before and not "after the arrival of Virgil in Rome..." (40). At the time of the *Bucolics* the nephew of Julius Caesar was not called "Augustus" (92). The text of page 106 seems to imply that Horace was a member of the circle of Maecenas before Vergil joined it. It is not indicated clearly that the second quotation in note 1 on page 27 is from Jerome's Chronicle. "...The annual committee for the election to the consulate and other offices of the republic..." (29) would make better sense if '*comitia*' should be substituted for "committee". Pollio went to war against the Parthians, not against "the Parthians toward the end of 40 B. C..." (82). Among the friends of Maecenas should be listed not "...Varius, Rufus..." (106), but 'Varius Rufus'. Horace did not write "*Saturnalia*, I, 5" (106, note 2). In the words "...for what Donatus and the scholastics say..." (108) "scholastics" should be changed to 'scholiasts'. It was Alfenus Varus and not "<Alfenus> Gallus" who "was accused of not having left to the Mantuans even the usual three miles of territory around the city..." (139). The title of Hirtzel's text of Vergil is not "*P. Vergili Maronis Opera*" (ix). The frontispiece reproduces a wood-cut of Pietole Vecchio which was made in 1800, not in "1900" (124, note 2); the verses quoted on page 4 are *Georgics* 3.8-18, not "8-15"; the quotation from Macrobius 5.2.1 given in note 2 of page 8 should not begin with "a"; the triumvirate formed in 43 was to terminate on the last day of 38 B. C., not of "49" (56).

Gratitude is due to Mrs. Rand for her careful translation, which makes available to English readers this clear and scholarly account of the youth of Vergil.

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CLASSICAL ARTICLES IN NON-CLASSICAL PERIODICALS

IV

Colorado College Publication—October 15, Vergil After Twenty Centuries, Charles C. Mierow [two addresses delivered on various occasions commemorative of the two thousandth anniversary of Vergil's birth].

Howard College Bulletin—September, The *Georgics* Viewed as National Poems, H. M. Martin ["Although on the surface the *Georgics* are technical poems dealing with the cultivation of the soil, in reality, they are national and ethical productions intimately connecting with reforms desired by the Emperor"]; The Sovereignty of <Julius> Caesar—An Appreciation, William N. Thomas.

Metropolitan Museum Studies—Volume III, Part II (1931), A Fragment of a Greek Stele from the Lansdowne Collection, Gisela M. A. Richter [with 12 photographic Plates and 2 sketches]; Two Assess-

³E. K. Rand, *The Magical Art of Virgil* (Harvard University Press, 1931), places the ninth before the first; the latter, he says (151), "was nearly, if not actually, the last to be written..."

⁴See also E. K. Rand, *In Quest of Virgil's Birthplace*, 130-134 (Harvard University Press, 1930) for a discussion of the manuscript problem. Professor Rand publishes photographic illustrations of the first page of text as given in each of the three manuscripts, in the *Editio Princeps*, and (Figure 115) in the Harvard copy of Egnatius's edition.

⁵Compare T. Rice Holmes, *The Roman Republic* 2.166 (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1923).

⁶Compare W. S. Messer, in *Mnemosyne* 45 (1917), 78-92.

- ments of the Athenian Empire, Allen B. West [with 13 photographic Plates and 2 inserted Plates containing epigraphical reconstructions. The article concerns the reconstruction, from existing fragments, of Athenian imperial assessment lists of the years 425/4 and 421 B. C.]; Archaic Cretan Terracottas in America, Edith H. Dohan [with 50 photographic Plates].
- Modern Language Notes—November, 'Beowulf' and 'Apollonius of Tyre', C. O. Chapman ["a striking series of parallels <?> between *Beowulf* and the Latin *Apollonius of Tyre*, a work which may well have come into the hands of the Englishman"]; French 'Latine' <'Antenna', Raphael Levy [a study in etymology].
- Modern Philology—August, Lucian and Du Bellay's *Poète Courtisan*, Robert V. Merrill; The First Edition of Vitruvius, Lily B. Campbell [this edition, undated, is generally accepted as having been issued in 1486. The article contains a complete version of the Latin dedication to Cardinal Raffaele Riario, written by Sulpitius Verulamius].
- Nation—October 28, Review, generally favorable, by Isidor Schneider, of Arthur Weigall, *The Life and Times of Marc Antony*.
- New York Times Magazine—June 28, Gods of Old Greece and Rome Enshrined in Berlin, T. R. Ybarra.
- Nineteenth Century and After—October, Horace's Journey to Brundisium, A. S. Owen [an account of a trip taken in April, 1930, along the route plotted by Horace, *Sermones* 1.5].
- Quarterly Review—October, Julian *versus* Christianity, F. R. Montgomery Hitchcock ["A monomaniac with an extravagant egotism he regarded as a personal affront the moral teaching of those who censured what he approved, and whose gospel of sincerity was a standing reproach to his own duplicity"].
- Revue de L'Histoire des Religions—January-June, Les Néréides Funéraires du Monument de Xanthos (lycie), Ch. Picard; Sur un Rite Curieux et Significatif du Culte de Vulcain à Rome, J. Toutain; Review, favorable, by F. Cumont, of Emile Benveniste, *The Persian Religion According to the Greek Texts*.
- Revue de Paris—September 15, Formes Méditerranéennes, I, Louis Hauteceur [the article deals in detail with the interrelationship through many centuries of occidental and oriental architectural forms]; October 1, Formes Méditerranéennes, II, Louis Hauteceur; Review, favorable, by A. Albert-Petit, of George Radet, *Alexandre le Grand*; October 15, Origines de l'École Française de Rome, Georges Goyau; Le Rétiaire et La Marchande de Couronnes ou La Veuve des Gladiateurs, Emile Henriot [a story centering in the amphitheater of Nîmes, ancient Nemausus].
- Revue des Questions Historiques—July, Chronique d'Histoire Ancienne Grecque et Romaine: L'Année 1930, A. Besnier.
- Revue Historique—May-June, Bulletin Historique; Histoire Grecque (1928-1930), Paul Cloché; Review, favorable, by A. Merlin, of David M. Robinson, *Excavations at Olynthus, Parts III and IV*; July-August, Les Prétextes Juridiques de la Troisième Guerre Punique (first article), Charles Saumagne [Causes et Prétextes: Définition des Prétextes. A. Le Premier Prétexte: Infraction à L'Interdit Cornélien de l'Année 201 av. J.-C.].
- Saturday Review (London)—July 4, Review, generally favorable, by Osbert Burdett, of Oskar von Wertheimer, *Cleopatra: A Royal Voluptuary* (translated by Huntley Paterson); Review, favorable, by W. T. Hill, of Emil Ludwig, *Schliemann of Troy: The Story of a Goldseeker*; September 12, Review, generally favorable, by Vernon Rendall, of Ferdinand Lot, *The End of the Ancient World and the Beginnings of the Middle Ages*.
- Saturday Review of Literature—September 19, Pattern of the Ancient World, Henry S. Canby [a favorable appreciation of the writings of Naomi Mitchison, including a favorable review of *The Corn King and the Spring Queen*]; October 3, Review, mildly favorable, by Elmer Davis, of George S. Hellman, *Peacock's Feather* [a story of Croesus and Aesop]; Review, very favorable, by C. A. Robinson, Jr., of Alan L. Chidsey, *Odysseus, Sage of Greece* [a juvenile book]; October 24, Review, unfavorable, anonymous, of Horace Gregory (translator), *The Poems of Catullus*; October 31, Review, favorable, anonymous, of Max Radin, *The Trial of Jesus of Nazareth*.
- School and Society—September 26, A Liberal Education—Past and Present, E. H. Brewster [comments made by Petronius, Martial, Pliny the Younger, Cicero, and Vitruvius on the value of a liberal training]; October 17, The Jacob Cooper Greek Prize. <On this prize see THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY 24. III. C. K.>.
- School Review—September, Review, generally unfavorable, by W. J. Grinstead, of Clyde Pharr, *Vergil's Aeneid, Books I-VI*; October, Present Status of Prognosis in Foreign Language, Walter V. Kaulfers ["Six hundred and twelve correlations reported over a period of thirty years by forty-six investigators in this country and abroad for the relations between foreign-language achievement and sixty-five bases of comparison should ordinarily be sufficient to demonstrate the relative validity of one criterion as compared with another for predicting success in foreign-language work. However, when the range of the coefficients in almost every case runs all the way from positive to negative and from significant to worthless, the question of the relative value of the various criteria for purposes of educational prognosis becomes rather more befuddled than clarified. That this, in a nutshell, is precisely the situation with respect to the present status of prognostic measurement in foreign language is revealed by the survey of fifty-one correlation studies and prognosis investigations published in the past thirty years which is reported in this article"].
- Scientific Monthly—November, The Mathematical Weakness of the Early Civilizations, G. A. Miller.

Spectator—September 12, Review, favorable, by C. E. M. Joad, of Gamaliel Milner, *The Problem of Decadence* [a study of the causes of the fall of Rome].

South Atlantic Quarterly—October, Greek and Roman Pets, Arthur M. Gates [mention is made of the dog, cat, horse, mule, deer, elephant, camel, giraffe, ostrich, lion, bull, pig, sheep, goat, monkey, ape, hare, snake, mouse, goose, parrot, and various other birds. "The Greek and Roman youth of two thousand years ago probably had on the whole a better opportunity than is available to the average youth of today to know animal life at first hand, but this was not because in that far off time more animals existed or were known, but because of the exceedingly close relationship between man and many of the lower animals"]; Review, generally favorable, by C. C. Jernigan, of Victor Bérard, *Did Homer Live?* (translated by Brian Rhys).

Studies in Philology—July, *Iter* and *Viaticum* in French, A. H. Schutz ["of the two Latin terms, *iter* and *via*, the latter alone survived the seventeenth century in literary French... It is the purpose of this paper... to account, in a large measure, for the victory of *via*"]; October, A Note on Ben Jonson's Literary Methods, A. C. Howell [the article contains remarks on Jonson's reading in the Classics and his imitation of them]; Sparsus, A Friend of Pliny, G. A. Harrer [the Sparsus to whom Pliny's *Epistulae* 4.5 and 8.3 are addressed is very probably Sextus Iulius Sparsus, consul in 88 A.D., named on a recently discovered Roman military diploma (printed in *L'Année Epigraphique*, 1927, 44)].

WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY

JOHN W. SPAETH, JR.

THE FRAGRANT BREEZES OF THE HAPPY LANDS

In 3.107-113 Herodotus discusses the perfumes of Arabia. He concludes (113): ἀπόζει δὲ τῆς χώρας τῆς Ἀραβίας θυσπέσιον ὡς ἡδύ. Rawlinson translates: "The whole country is scented with them, and exhales an odour marvellously sweet".

Lucian refers to this passage in his *True History*, Book 2, lines 85-90 (in the edition by C. S. Jerram, Oxford: At the Clarendon Press [1928]):

ἥδη δὲ πλησίον τε ἡμεν, καὶ θανμαστή τις αἶρα περιέπνευσεν ἡμᾶς, ἡδεῖα καὶ εὐώδης, οἷαν φησὶν ὁ συγγραφεὺς Ἡρόδοτος ἀπόζειν τῆς εὐδαίμονος Ἀραβίας. οἷον γὰρ ἀπὸ ῥόδων καὶ ναρκίσσων καὶ δακύνων καὶ κρίνων καὶ ἰων, ἔτι δὲ μυρρίνης καὶ δάφνης καὶ ἀμπελάνθης, τοιοῦτον ἡμῖν τὸ ἡδὺ προσέβαλλεν.

Lucian thus, then, describes the fragrance of the Blessed Isle. Roman poets had associated fragrance with the Happy Lands. Vergil suggests idyllic happiness in *Eclogue* 3.89 by the words, *mella fluant illi, ferat et rubus asper amomum*. Fragrance is associated with the Golden Age in *Eclogue* 4.25 *Assyrium vulgo nascetur amomum*. Tibullus, in his description

of Elysium, does not forget fragrant plants (3.61-62):
fert casiam non culta seges, tososque per agros
flore odoratis terra benigna rosis....

The early voyagers to this country were greeted by fragrant breezes from the land. Mrs. Alice Morse Earle, in her charming book, *Old Time Gardens* (New York, The Macmillan Company, 1916), refers (1) to the coming of the Puritan founders of Boston to their 'Land of Promise'. She continues: "their noble leader, John Winthrop, wrote in his Journal that 'we had now fair Sunshine Weather and so pleasant a sweet Aire as did much refresh us, and there came a smell off the Shore like the Smell of a Garden'..." This fragrance, she likes to think (2), may have been that of "Sweet Fern, the characteristic wild perfume of New England..."

However, Mrs. Willa Cather, in *Shadows on the Rock*, 189 (New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1931), gives a different source of the aromatic breezes that met the voyager to Canada¹:

...After he had passed the point at Saint Petronille and turned into the south channel, a sweet, warm odour blew out from the shore, very like the smell of ripe strawberries. Each time the boat passed a little cove, this fragrance grew stronger, the air seemed saturated with it. All the early explorers wrote with much feeling about these balmy odours that blew out from the Canadian shores,—nothing else seemed to stir their imagination so much. That fragrance is really the aromatic breath of spruce and pine, given out under the hot sun of noonday, but the early navigators believed it was the smell of luscious unknown fruits, wafted out to sea.

In our own times a familiar hymn has associated aromatic breezes with Ceylon. Lord Frederick Hamilton, in *The Days Before Yesterday* (New York, George H. Doran Company, 1920), tells of being provoked by this hymn to a bit of mischief. On page 203 he describes a voyage from Calcutta to Ceylon, on a steamer on which there was a number of Americans. He continues:

When we got within about a hundred miles of Ceylon, these American ladies all began repeating to each other the verse of the well-known hymn:

"What though the spicy breezes
Blow soft on Ceylon's isle,"

over and over again, until I loathed Bishop Heber for having written the lines. They even asked the captain how far out to sea the spicy breezes would be perceptible. I suddenly got an idea and, going below, I obtained from the steward half a dozen nutmegs and a handful of cinnamon. I grated the nutmegs and pounded the cinnamon up, and then, with one hand full of each, I went on deck, and walked slowly up and down in front of the American tourists. Soon I heard an ecstatic cry, "My dear, I distinctly smelt spice then!" Another turn, and another jubilant exclamation: "It's quite true about the spicy breezes. I got a delicious whiff just then. Who would have thought that they would have carried so far out to sea?"... Now those people will go on declaring to the end of their lives that they smelt the spicy odors of Ceylon a full hundred miles out at sea?....

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MARY JOHNSTON

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